

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of accessing information, comprising the steps of:
 distributing information objects across a plurality of servers;
 maintaining a centralized status of each of said servers;
 receiving a request for one of said information objects;
 inspecting said centralized status to determine an availability of one of said servers
 having said information object; and
 selectively responding to said request with a redirection message selectively
 redirecting said request to said one server.
2. The method according to claim 1 further comprising a step of selectively
 transmitting an error message in response to said request and said inspecting step resulting in
 a determination that said one server is unavailable.
3. The method according to claim 1 wherein said step of selectively responding
 to said request includes redirecting said request to one of (i) said one server and (ii) an error
 handling object.
4. The method according to claim 3 wherein said error handling object comprises
 an error message.
5. The method according to claim 3 wherein said error handling object comprises
 a redirection command.
6. The method according to claim 1 wherein each of said information objects
 comprise a web page.

1 7. The method according to claim 1 wherein said maintaining step includes
2 periodically updating a status of each of said servers.

1 8. The method according to claim 7 wherein said updating step includes ping
2 said servers.

1 9. An information server system comprising
2 a plurality of servers, each hosting a different information object;
3 a centralized database storing a status of each of said servers;
4 a communication interface configured to receive a request for one of said information
5 objects; and
6 a controller responsive to said request and to said status of each of said servers for
7 selectively responding to said request with a redirection message selectively redirecting said
8 request to one of said servers.

1 10. The system according to claim 9 wherein said controller is configured to
2 selectively transmit an error message in response to said request and said inspecting step
3 resulting in a determination that said one server is unavailable.

1 11. The system according to claim 9 wherein said controller selectively responds
2 to said request by redirecting said request to one of (i) said servers and (ii) an error handling
3 object.

1 12. The system according to claim 11 wherein said error handling object
2 comprises an error message.

1 13. The system according to claim 11 wherein said error handling object
2 comprises a redirection command.

1 14. The system according to claim 9 wherein each of said information objects
2 comprise respective web pages.

1 15. The system according to claim 9 wherein said controller is configured to
2 periodically update said status of said servers stored in said database.

1 16. The system according to claim 15 wherein said controller is configured to
2 periodically ping each of said servers.

1 17. A method of providing a website, comprising the steps of:
2 storing web pages on a plurality of distinct web servers;
3 maintaining a centralized status of each of said web servers;
4 receiving a request from a remote client for one of said web pages;
5 identifying a status of a one of said web servers hosting said one web page; and
6 selectively responding to said request with a redirection message selectively
7 redirecting said remote client to said one server.

1 18. The method according to claim 17 further comprising a step of selectively
2 transmitting an error message in response to said request and said identifying step resulting in
3 a determination that said one server is unavailable.

1 19. The method according to claim 17 wherein said step of periodically updating a
2 status of each of said servers.

- 1 20. The method according to claim 19 wherein said updating step includes pinging
2 said servers.

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